

CPYRGHT

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'Master Spy'

The appointment of Vice Adm. W. F. Raborn Jr., U.S.N., retired, as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency came as the kind of surprise President Johnson loves to spring. Nearly everybody else had been mentioned as the successor to John A. McCone; Admiral Raborn, though a Texan, was a complete dark horse.

A naval aviator, Admiral Raborn is a highly competent officer; his services to the nation in the promotion, management and administration of the Polaris submarine missile program were outstanding. He is the kind of man who enlists and keeps the loyalties of subordinates. He is also a man of sound judgment, well acquainted in Washington and respected both in the Pentagon and on Capitol Hill. All these virtues are major.

The liabilities are, however, important. Admiral Raborn has had little intelligence experience; and the job of running the most complex intelligence operation in the world, and of coordinating other intelligence organizations jealous of their prerogatives, is one that requires professional expertise as well as tact, charm and strength. Another liability is Admiral Raborn's age; he is 59.

The C.I.A. post should be a nonpartisan, long-term appointment; it is absolutely essential for continuity and effectiveness that intelligence be kept out of politics and that it be headed by men who will give to it major portions of their lives.

Fortunately, the companion appointment of Richard Helms as Deputy Director of the C.I.A., compensates to a considerable degree for Admiral Raborn's lack of past intelligence experience. Mr. Helms is one of the most respected intelligence experts in the country—if anyone can be called expert in this fantastically difficult field.